scholarship
activism
community
change
WOMEN'S RESEARCH & RESOURCE CENTER
SPELMAN COLLEGE
radically

scholarship
activism
community
change

what we stand for

The Spelman College Women's Research & Resource Center embraces our unique identity and claims our pioneering role among historically Black and women's colleges firmly rooted in the liberal arts tradition. We are committed to creating a global community of progressive women and men who envision a world free from injustice, exploitation, violence, poverty, waste, greed, illness, and misogyny. We are especially opposed to practices and images that debase African American and other women of color. Through curricular innovation, scholarship, activism and collaborations, the Women's Center is educating future generation of free-thinking, unapologetic Black women who will document our stories, advocate for our rights, and join with others in the ongoing struggle to transform our communities and rescue the planet!

The Women's Center.
Radically translating knowledge into action.

"**In 1981, we began with a simple goal** — to introduce more courses on women in the curriculum. Now, nearly three decades later, the Women's Center has had an impact neither I nor my colleagues would have ever imagined. We have uncovered and made available buried narratives of women of African descent. We have advocated on behalf of Black women nationally and globally. We have provided a space and catalyst for collaborations across difference. And we have carefully crafted curricular and co-curricular programs so that our students are able to explore the interconnectedness of systemic inequalities. In addition to the expanding field of Women's Studies, we have students going into public health, international policy, journalism, scientific research, politics, filmmaking and education — careers that allow them to effect change."

— Beverly Guy-Sheftall
Founding Director, Women's Center

The Center's six signature programs & initiatives:

- ♀ Comparative Women's Studies
- ♀ The Archives & Research
- ♀ Advocacy & Outreach
- ♀ Student Activist Leadership
- ♀ Digital Media
- ♀ Global Women's Health

Re-claiming the "f-word"

feminism — the commitment to end sexism, racism and other inequalities — is fundamental to who we are and what we do. Recognizing that Black women's experiences are shaped by race and gender, the Center is an academic and social space that appreciates the complexity of Black female identity.

The Women's Center is part of a Black feminist intellectual tradition, dating back to the nineteenth century. We continue the legacy of pioneers such as Maria Stewart, the first Black woman to speak publicly about women's rights.

Students engage faculty and each other about race, gender, class and sexuality. We make visible the involvement of Black women in their local communities, on the national stage, and in areas around the globe.

The Center also provides a political space for feminist activism. It was in a feminist theory class that students debated the "Tip Drill" rap video and committed to take action against its misogynistic images. It sparked a national dialogue that still rages today.

"The Women's Center was a place where I was politicized and nurtured — and if I needed to vent and gather my sister allies, it was that place, too. Love was never lacking. Sisterhood was always plentiful. The Women's Center is where I, and so many others, became 'Afrafemme,' and we say thank you. We will always return, love deeply, and uphold the spirit of the Center."

— Taneya Gethers, C'2002

first

The history of the Women's Center has been distinguished by a series of firsts... **first** at an historically Black college to offer a comparative women's studies major and minor... **first** to establish an endowed professorship in Women's Studies named in honor of a Black female intellectual — Anna Julia Cooper — and funded by Black philanthropists — Drs. Bill and Camille Cosby, along with the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

- ♀ In 1983, the Women's Center was first to host a scholarly journal on Black women, *SAGE*

- ♀ In 1997, we were first to acquire the papers of Audre Lorde, one of the most significant Black feminist activist/writer/educators of the twentieth century. Since then, we have acquired the papers of Selma Burke (1999), Audrey Forbes Manley (2000), Toni Cade Bambara (2004), and Johnnetta Betsch Cole (2005).

- ♀ In 2002, the Center was again first, taking the initiative to conduct a bibliographic survey of the holdings of 95 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) spanning 20 states and the District of Columbia, the HBCU Archival Project.

"There is nothing so magical; there is nothing as potentially powerful; there is nothing so fierce, nothing so nurturing as a community of Black women who know who they are."

— Toni Morrison,
Writer and Nobel laureate
Spelman College Commencement Address, 1978

SUE ROSS

From its founding, the Center has been a mecca for pioneering Black women artists, scholars, and activists. (left to right) TOP ROW: Louise Meriwether, Pinkie Gordon Lane, Johnnetta Cole, Paula Giddings CENTER: Pearl Cleage, Gwendolyn Brooks, Toni Cade Bambara BOTTOM: Sonia Sanchez, Nikki Giovanni, Mari Evans

different

The Center facilitates curricular innovations and student and faculty development on a range of women's rights issues. Highlights over the years include:

- An international conference on the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic on women and girls in Africa and the African Diaspora that brought together over 300 academics, scientists, activists, AIDS survivors, health care workers, and students — representing countries in the U.S., the Caribbean, Latin America and Africa.
- The Audre Lorde Black Lesbian Feminist Project, conceived to increase public awareness and understanding of African American gay and lesbian experiences
- The first National Black Women's Health Conference, which helped to launch the Black women's health movement
- The first "Take Back the Night Rally" staged on an HBCU campus — part of the international campaign to protest rape and other forms of violence against women
- A student-organized protest against misogynistic images of Black women in hip hop culture that incited national dialogue when picked up by the "Oprah" Winfrey show, along with other national and local media outlets

Our faculty provide interdisciplinary direction and vision for the academic curriculum and for the Center's many innovative programs and initiatives.

Beverly Guy-Sheftall, Ph.D.
Anna Julia Cooper Professor of Women's Studies; Founding Director, Women's Research & Resource Center

A pioneer in the field of women's studies, Beverly Guy-Sheftall is the recipient of numerous fellowships and awards for her scholarship and feminist activism. She lectures and consults widely on race, class, gender, and sexuality issues, and has served on the boards of various women's advocacy organizations, including the Black Women's Health Imperative, the National Council for Research on Women, and the National Coalition of 100 Black Women.

- ♀ *Gender Talk: The Struggle for Women's Equality in African American Communities*, 2003 (co-authored with Johnnetta B. Cole)
- ♀ *Traps: African American Men on Gender and Sexuality*, 2001 (co-edited with Rudolph Byrd)
- ♀ *Words of Fire: An Anthology of African American Feminist Thought*, 1995

Ayoka Chenzira
Professor of Women's Studies and Founding Director, Digital Moving Image Salon (DMIS)

An award-winning, internationally acclaimed film and video artist, Ayoka Chenzira is one of the first African American women to write, produce and direct a 35mm feature film and is considered to be one of the first African American woman animators. Her repertoire includes documentaries, features, performance art, animation, and experimental narratives. She teaches and lectures about film in the US and abroad, and has worked on special film commissions in Austria, England, and Brazil. Her pioneering work in Black independent cinema has garnered critical and popular acclaim. She is the recipient of a Sony Innovator Award for her work with film, video and computer animation, and a Distinguished Educator Award from Apple Computer for her work with storytelling and digital technology.

- ♀ *Flying Over Purgatory*, 2001
- ♀ *Alma's Rainbow*, 1998
- ♀ *Hairpiece: a film for nappyheaded people*, 1984

M. Bahati Kuumba, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Women's Studies; Associate Director, Women's Resource & Resource Center

Focusing on social resistance movements, population policy and global African/Black feminist theory and praxis, M. Bahati Kuumba's research and activism explore African women's experiences transnationally. Her work has prompted collaborations with women and women's organizations in the United States, Canada, Cuba, Brazil, Zimbabwe and South Africa. In 2005, Spelman awarded Kuumba the Fannie Lou Hamer Achievement Award by the College to a faculty or staff member in recognition of significant contributions to the community. She has published widely in scholarly journals, anthologies, and activist publications.

- ♀ *Transnational Transgressions: African Women and Transformational Struggle in Global Perspective*, 2005 (co-edited with Monica M. White)
- ♀ *Gender and Social Movements*, 2001

Johnnella E. Butler, Ed.D.
Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Professor of Women's Studies

A pioneer in curriculum transformation, Butler coined the term "difficult dialogues," reflecting the dynamics between gender and race and the relationship between Women's Studies and Ethnic Studies (Women's Review of Books, 1989). She has directed twelve major grants and has authored three books and thirty-one scholarly articles. One of the four editors for the first *Encyclopedia of American Studies* (2001), her most recent publications include "African American Literature and Realist Theory: Seeking the 'true-true,'" in *Identity Politics Reconsidered* (2006), and "Ethnic Studies and Interdisciplinarity" in *Research Methods in Ethnic Studies* (2008). Formerly honored as Liberal Arts Professor (1994-95) at the University of Washington, she is also the recipient of the Irby Award for Distinguished Service from the National Association of Ethnic Studies (2006).

- ♀ *Transforming the Curriculum: Ethnic Studies and Women's Studies*, 1991
- ♀ *Color-Line to Borderlands: The Matrix of American Ethnic Studies*, 2001

Adjunct Faculty

Keri Norris, Ph.D.
Specializes in women's health and the particular health disparities impacting Black women.

Andy M. Lowery
Specializes in the complications and connections between feminism and hip-hop and community-driven social movements.

vision
creating
new
paradigms
for effecting
change

As the Women's Center continues to evolve, we will increase experimentation with digital media and emerging technologies.

...design and develop LGBT and other programs that break the silence and embrace difference.

...collaborate with faculty in other disciplines to explore the gender and racial dimensions of science and the under-examined contributions of women of color.

...strive to live out the vision of a "beloved community," teaching our students how to use analytical, organizing, and creative tools in the ongoing struggle for equality and justice.

advisory board

Founding Director

Beverly Guy-Sheftall*

Members

Pearl Cleage*

Johnnetta Betsch Cole

Kimberle Williams Crenshaw

Lisa Egbuonu-Davis

LisaGay Hamilton

Evelynn M. Hammonds*

Glenda Hatchett

Anita Hill

bell hooks

LaTanya Richardson Jackson*

Robin D.G. Kelley

Theodora R. Lee*

Miriam Makeba

Wilma Mankiller

Louis Massiah

Carolyn Odom*

Bernice Johnson Reagon*

Jacqueline Jones Royster*

Olivia A. Scriven (ex officio)

Nancy Snyderman

Gloria Steinem

Alice Walker

Diana Chapman Walsh

Celeste Watkins-Hayes*

Levi Watkins, Jr.

* Spelman College Alumna

"**Since our founding more than a century ago** in the basement of a local church with 11 former slave women and girls, Spelman College has made pace-setting transformations. The Women's Research & Resource Center has been critical to past and will remain vital to future efforts.

It was through the Women's Center that the Ford Foundation — the largest and most sustained sponsor of Center programs — awarded funding in 2002 to provide faculty development and establish courses that now help students explore the gender question in science. Before it was part of the national dialogue, the Center hosted gatherings to raise awareness about Black women and HIV/AIDS and women's health more broadly. I was delighted when Pfizer, Inc. invested funds and deployed a senior executive during the 2004-2006 academic years to help the Center strengthen efforts in this area. And when the Center celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary last year with a week-long series of events, the audience of scholars, students and the surrounding community were absolutely ecstatic to learn that the Arcus Foundation had provided the Center with funds to process and make available for public access the papers of the phenomenal writer, activist and educator, Audre Lorde. The Center's current grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to support strategic planning can only help to inform bigger and greater things.

I look forward to working with Beverly Guy-Sheftall and the members of the Women's Center National Advisory Board to reach our goal of establishing a permanent endowment to support Center programs. I especially look forward to meeting and talking with you as we move forward to reach this important goal."

— Beverly Daniel Tatum, Ph.D.
President, Spelman College

The Women's Research & Resource Center

Breaking the Silence:
The Audre Lorde Project

Friday, September 12th, 2008

Camille Olivia Hanks Cosby, Ed.D.
Academic Center
Spelman College · Atlanta, Georgia

THE WOMEN'S RESEARCH & RESOURCE CENTER

The Women's Research and Resource Center at Spelman College embraces our unique identity and claims our pioneering role among historically black colleges and women's colleges firmly rooted in the liberal arts tradition.

We are committed to creating a global community of progressive women and men who envision a world free from injustices, exploitation, violence, poverty, waste, greed, illness, and misogyny. We are especially opposed to practices and images that debase African American and other women of color.

Through curricular innovation, scholarship, activism and collaborations, the Women's Center is educating future generations of free-thinking, unapologetic Black women who will document our stories, advocate for our rights, and join with others in the ongoing struggle to transform our communities and rescue the planet.

Radically translating Knowledge into action.

arcus
FOUNDATION

A Statement of Support
Urvashi Vaid, Executive Director
Alvin Starks, Senior Program Officer
September 12, 2008

On behalf of the Arcus Foundation and its Board of Directors, we are honored to support and participate in the culminating celebration of *Breaking the Silence: the Audre Lorde Black Lesbian Feminist Project* with the Women's Research and Resource Center at Spelman College. Today's event would not be possible without the vision, courage and wisdom of three important women at Spelman College - Dr. Beverly Guy-Sheftall, Founding Director of the Women's Center, Dr. Olivia A. Scriven, Senior Advisor for Academic Development, and Spelman President Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum. The Arcus Foundation wishes to acknowledge and thank all of the talented people who worked countless hours to give Audre Lorde's most influential writings a proud home at Spelman College. We believe that Audre Lorde's papers and legacy are rightfully home at Spelman College because, like Audre's life's work, the College's life is dedicated to the intellectual freedom, power and advancement of black women. There can be no more fitting home for Audre Lorde's papers than an institution that dares to value, strengthen and support generations of black women scholars and leaders committed to addressing the most pressing concerns of the 21st century.

As some of you may know, the Arcus Foundation is a private international grant making foundation founded by philanthropist Jon Stryker. The Foundation's mission is to achieve social justice that is inclusive of sexual orientation, gender identity and race, and to ensure the conservation and respect of great apes. Our work on human rights and conservation is done from a social justice perspective – with an eye toward strengthening social movements, supporting policy and institutional change and transforming cultural understanding. Through Arcus Foundation's Racial Justice, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity program, the Foundation supports bold ideas and organizations that will truly transform institutions, social movements, policies, and cultural attitudes to recognize and respect the human rights of LGBT people of color. Specifically, the program supports the voice, leadership and power of LGBT people of color to secure civil rights, social inclusion and justice.

Our initial funding relationship with Spelman College began in 2006, when Dr. Tatum shared with us a proposal prepared by the Women's Center to support a national symposium of leading scholars, advocates, community members and students to examine the work of black lesbian feminist scholarship and to promote the unique contributions of Audre Lorde within the broader civil rights, lesbian and gay rights and social justice movements. Our work with Spelman was so exciting that we have continued our relationship with the College through a new two-year grant to the Women's Center to support its leadership and organizing to understand and transform the treatment of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people and issues in the institutional and academic lives of historically black colleges and universities.

Undeniably, Audre Lorde's work lays the foundation for the College's ongoing commitment to understanding the complicated intersections of racism, sexism, economic inequality and homophobia. She was a brilliant writer whose work advanced the notion that identities are not mutually exclusive, but must be addressed collectively in order to truly achieve liberation, compassion, justice and community. She wrote eloquently about why African Americans, cannot let our fears, feelings or institutions continue to exploit homophobia as a means to deny, avoid or exclude the full participation of black lesbians and gays in black communities and movements. As a black feminist, Audre Lorde offered a compelling blueprint of a new world in which power was redistributed and poetry and art, the erotic and intimacy were as valued as commerce and traditional forms of political expression.

Today we stand at a breakthrough moment that will establish a permanent home for the important writings and artifacts of Audre Lorde. Yet, we must recognize that the fight to challenge the pervasive and systemic constructions of homophobia, racism and sexism continues. Women, people of color, lesbians and gays, and poor people are still denied human rights, economic rights and the dignity and respect that bias disallows. The times in which we live require Black lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people to stand up and not be silent. Silence was never an option for Audre Lorde. Audre Lorde understood that we must become activists and thinkers in order to change the course of our destinies. She remains one of our mentors and inspirations – a brilliant, proud black woman, a lesbian leader and visionary, and a prophetic voice standing up against bigotry of all forms.

May the creation of this new digital depository inspire activists and scholars to examine the work of Audre Lorde and encourage new models of advocacy and academic freedom. May these papers and Spelman's leadership, strengthen the connection between all forms of social justice work and may it produce meaningful change in the lives of lesbian and gays, people of color and women.

WELCOME

Greetings from the Spelman Community — Johnnella E. Butler
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Spelman College

Statement from the Arcus Foundation ..... Beverly Guy-Sheftall, C'66
Founding Director, The Women's Research & Resource Center

REMEMBERING AUDRE LORDE

Why Audre Lorde Chose Spelman College ..... Johnnetta B. Cole
President Emerita, Spelman College and Bennett College for Women
Member, Women's Center Advisory Board

Lorde's Life and Activism in St. Croix ..... Gloria Joseph
Companion of Audre Lorde

THE SPELMAN ARCHIVES AND THE LORDE PROJECT

The Spelman Archives ..... Taronda Spencer, C'80
Spelman College Archivist

Processing the Lorde Collection ..... Brenda S. Banks, C'71
Banks Archives Consultants

PANEL: SIGNIFICANCE OF AUDRE LORDE ..... M. Bahati Kuumba, Moderator
Associate Professor and Associate Director, The Women's Center

Panelists:
Taryn Crenshaw, CWS Major and President, Afrekete
Opal Moore, Associate Professor, Department of English
Frances Wood, Lorde Scholar

CLOSING REMARKS ..... Beverly Guy-Sheftall, C'66

RECEPTION
(General Audience)

Audre Lorde (1934-1992) was one of the most significant and influential Black lesbian feminist writer/activist/educators of the twentieth century. Her first book of poetry, The First Cities, was published in 1969, while Sister Outsider, her first collection of essays, was released in 1984. Lorde's visit to the Spelman College campus in the late eighties was the first time in Spelman's history that an out, Black lesbian feminist scholar/writer spoke openly to students and faculty about the need to break silences about sexuality issues within Black communities and Black colleges. The gift of her papers to the Spelman Archives (managed by the Women's Research & Resource Center) signaled the possibility that Spelman could become one of the most important repositories for the work of contemporary Black women intellectuals/activists in the academy. The collection (40 linear feet) is the most comprehensive documentation of Lorde's life and work.

Spelman College

A Choice to Change the World

Funding for this Project provided by the Arcus Gay and Lesbian Fund of the:

arcus FOUNDATION

Founded in 2000, the mission of the Arcus Foundation is to achieve social justice that is inclusive of sexual orientation, gender identity and race, and to ensure the conservation and respect of great apes. The Arcus Foundation is led by its Founder and President Jon L. Stryker and Board members Cathy J. Cohen, Daniel Schwartz and Darren Walker. Urvashi Vaid is the Foundation's Executive Director. Alvin Starks is Senior Program Officer for Racial Justice, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. The Foundation has offices in Kalamazoo, Michigan; New York, New York; and Cambridge, UK.

Black and White Photo of Audre Lorde from the Audre Lorde Collection, Spelman College Archives
Program Graphic Design: ©2008 Kimberley Cartier for Another Image Consulting

Spelman
College

The Women's Center Endowment Initiative:

Ensuring A Legacy of Scholarship, Activism, Community and Change!

Our distinctive role

The Women's Center is recognized in the United States and beyond as a pioneer in higher education. Since 1981, the Center has worked to advance issues of race and gender and to educate dynamic Black women committed to working with diverse communities to bring about progressive social change. The Center is entering a new era of growth, and the next five years will prove critical in executing strategies to continue the Center's distinctive legacy.

Our bold vision

We have a bold mission and compelling ideas. Our goal, as part of the $175 million Spelman Campaign for Transformation, is to establish a permanent endowment for the Center. Establishment of the endowment would mark the first time in Spelman's 126-year history that an existing academic unit will have a separate, restricted endowment to ensure and sustain program operational support.

Our investors

The Center enjoys annual support from alumnae, individuals, federal agencies, private organizations and corporations. The Ford Foundation has been our largest and longest supporter for more than 25 years! When Ford learned of our efforts, they immediately went to work to invest in our vision, offering the opportunity of a special $1 million endowment grant and challenging the Center to engage other stakeholders to meet the match.

Our partnership with you

Establishment of the endowment is the first phase in a plan of strategic growth to strengthen our position as a vital site in the academy for the development of women's studies, women's advocacy projects, teaching and scholarship by and about Black women, digital media, and student activist leadership development.

We are so very pleased to have you as a partner.

Naming Opportunities:

$3 million. . . . . Endowed Distinguished Professorship

$2 million . . . . . Endowed Professorship

$1 million . . . . . Endowed Assistant Professorship

$500,000 . . . . . Core Programs

- ♀ Women's Health
- ♀ Student Activist Leadership
- ♀ Digital Media
- ♀ Research Initiatives (by and/or about Black Women)
- ♀ Advocacy & Outreach

$50,000 and above . . . . . Endowed Scholarship

$10,000 and above . . . . . Name on Donor Plaque

$1,000 to $9,999 . . . . . Special Gift Societies

ARCHIVES AND RESEARCH

COMPARATIVE WOMEN'S STUDIES

STUDENT ACTIVIST LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

GLOBAL BLACK WOMEN'S HEALTH

ADVOCACY AND OUTREACH

DIGITAL MEDIA

The Women's Center houses the Digital Movi
and curriculum development relating to t
David Geffen Foundation, DMIS at
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artist, Ayoka Chenzira
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$50,000 and above . . . . . Endowed Scholarship

$10,000 and above . . . . . Name on Donor Plaque

$1,000 to $9,999 . . . . . Special Gift Societies

DIGITAL MEDIA

The Women's Center houses the Digital Moving Image Salon (DMIS), which is actively engaged in faculty and curriculum development relating to the use of digital media. Launched in 2004 with support from the David Geffen Foundation, DMIS at Spelman introduces students to the expressive power of digital media as tools for creating stories and exploring issues relevant to their lives and the lives of women locally, nationally and internationally. Founded and directed by critically acclaimed filmmaker and digital media artist, Ayoka Chenzira, who also served as the colleges' first Cosby Endowed Professor, the program attracts students from a wide range of disciplines.

Students in DMIS take the program's seminal courses: *Cinemythic Journey: Black Woman As Hero in American Cinema* and the year-long course, *Documenting Women: Oral Narratives and Digital Media.* Just two years into the program's existence, student productions were presented at national and international festivals. The following year DMIS graduated the college's first independent film major who was also selected as a Fulbright Scholar in the Czech Republic. Documentaries produced in DMIS are on wide-ranging subject matter spanning, for example, dating culture in the Atlanta University Center (AUC), Black women and aging, eating disorders, female victim blaming in domestic violence, student activism at Spelman College, and homophobia in the AUC.

DMIS research assistants work on digital media projects in the form of video production, tangible interactive sculptures, and cell phone production. In addition, they have worked on faculty- and student-centered projects, including the year-long collaboration between faculty of DMIS and the Durban Institute of Technology in South Africa.

DMIS students are exposed to award-winning films and cutting edge digital media productions by Black women through the program's annual series, *Reel Women: Conversations with Black Women Who Work With the Moving Image*. The program also sponsors an annual student showcase for students to exhibit and discuss their own work.

WOMEN'S RESEARCH & RESOURCE CENTER
SPELMAN COLLEGE

ADVOCACY AND OUTREACH

The Women's Center advocates on and off campus for women's rights across a broad range of issues, including reproductive rights, gay and lesbian rights, violence against women, the elimination of health disparities among African Americans, the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic on women and girls, and manifestations of misogyny in popular culture. Committed to eradicating racism, sexism and heterosexism, the Center promotes the empowerment of women of African descent in the United States and around the globe. The Center's outreach efforts extend to other academic institutions, women's advocacy groups, and non-governmental organizations working on gender issues. In many instances, these collaborations have resulted in major conferences, symposia, workshops, and lecture and film series. Some highlights over the Center's nearly thirty-year history include:

- In 1983, the first Black women's health conference - a collaborative effort with the National Black Women's Health Project. The event was instrumental in launching a Black women's health movement in the U.S.
- In 2003, collaborated with historically disadvantaged institutions in Durban, South Africa to train a new generation of female filmmakers. The project resulted in five student-produced documentaries exploring, from multiple dimensions, the contemporary status of women in post-apartheid South Africa.
- In 2005, the first (and, to date, the only) invitational international conference on an historically Black college campus to raise awareness about the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic on women and girls in Africa and the African Diaspora. Among the more than three-hundred participants from the U.S., Southern Africa, West Africa, Europe, the Caribbean and Latin America were students, educators, activists and community organizers, researchers, health care practitioners, and individuals living with HIV/AIDS.
- In 2007, the ZAMI Project helped to launch the only Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Program on the campus of an historically Black college or university. Rooted in the teachings and writings of Audre Lorde and funded by the Arcus Foundation, this unique project raised awareness about homophobia in African American communities and positioned Spelman as a national model for inclusive campus environments. The student-organized Toni Cade Bambara Scholar/Activist conference (2007) associated with the project brought a host of LGBT scholars and activists to the campus to discuss salient issues. When Phase I of the Audre Lorde Project culminates in 2008, we estimate that the project will have directly impacted more than 500 faculty, students, and staff from Spelman, a host of other academic institutions in the U.S. and abroad, and many community activists.

WOMEN'S RESEARCH & RESOURCE CENTER
SPELMAN COLLEGE

WOMEN'S RESEARCH & RESOURCE CENTER scholarship...activism...community...change

GLOBAL BLACK WOMEN'S HEALTH

African American and other women of color suffer disproportionately from what the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has described as the "burden of disease and death." HIV/AIDS, obesity, diabetes, domestic violence, heart disease, and breast and cervical cancer are a few of the chronic and often preventable diseases which compromise the health status of Black women, robbing families, communities and the nation of leadership and talent.

The *Global Black Women's Health Initiative* is a campus-wide effort designed to raise awareness and integrate topics of health in Spelman's course offerings, student research training, and community programs. Coordinated through the Women's Research and Resource Center, the *Global Black Women's Health Initiative* received initial major funding from the Ford Foundation and Pfizer, Inc. to explore models of program design, firm-up the minor concentration in Women's Health as part of the Comparative Women's Studies major, and appoint Dr. Lisa Egbuonu-Davis, a Johns Hopkins-trained pediatrician and former vice president at the company, as scholar-in-residence. Once fully operational, the *Women's Health Initiative* will also include:

- An *Endowed Distinguished Professorship*
- *Student scholarships, research training, and internships*
- *Cross-disciplinary research and curriculum development*
- A *Visiting Scholar-in-Residence*
- *Symposia*

The Women's Research and Resource Center has committed to play a major role in helping to radically re-envision how we teach, engage in research and talk about women's health on our own campus, and the ways in which we collaborate with other educators to restructure the undergraduate curriculum. Through the *Global Black Women's Health Initiative*, our ultimate goal is to position Spelman College as a national resource in the education of knowledgeable, skilled and socially responsible women who can engage in race- and gender-specific research, policy analysis, business development, education and advocacy efforts related to Black women's health specifically and women's health more broadly.

WOMEN'S RESEARCH & RESOURCE CENTER
SPELMAN COLLEGE

STUDENT ACTIVIST LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The Women's Center's student activist/leadership development program is named in honor of the late Toni Cade Bambara (1939-1995), a prolific and influential writer, filmmaker, and community activist. From its inception in 1981, the Women's Center has embraced the tradition of Black scholar/activist foremothers like Bambara by combining a commitment to feminist knowledge with a strong impulse towards activism.

The Toni Cade Bambara Writer/Scholar/Activist Collective provides opportunities for Spelman and Atlanta University Center undergraduate students across academic disciplines to develop and demonstrate their scholarly, critical/analytical, and activist skills through written expression. Toni Cade Bambara Scholars engage in dialogue with writers/scholars/activists in a range of forums throughout the academic year. The program sponsors an annual lecture and workshop series; a student collective; and an annual newsletter, *Sisters of the Word*. In 2001, the program inaugurated the first annual Toni Cade Bambara Scholar/Activist Conference. Organized by students, the event features papers, panels, films and workshops by students, faculty, and activists locally, nationally, and internationally.

The Women's Center is proud of the catalytic role it has played and continues to play in nurturing student activists. Presently, several student organizations are associated with the Center:

- the Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance (FMLA)
- Afrekete
- SisterFire
- the Toni Cade Bambara Collective

These student groups have organized campaigns, forums, demonstrations, "speak-outs," "sit-ins," "walk-outs," and "die-ins" for a wide range of progressive political causes, including movements for reproductive rights and against rape and sexual violence, homophobia, and the war in Iraq.

In 2005, the Center worked with Women's Studies students and the Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance to organize a national protest against the rap artist Nelly for the misogynistic treatment of women in his popular music video "Tip Drill." The protest, which ignited a nationwide dialogue about negative images of women in popular culture, was picked up by major networks and by national and local news outlets, resulting in more than 10 million media impressions and a segment with Spelman students on the internationally distributed *Oprah Winfrey* show. Filmmakers from around the world traveled to the Spelman campus. Coverage of the protest can be found in Byron Hurt's critically acclaimed documentary on masculinity in hip-hop, *Beyond Beats and Rhymes.* Women's Studies students have also staged marches against violence against women that have been covered as well in documentaries such as *Silent Choices.*

WOMEN'S RESEARCH & RESOURCE CENTER
SPELMAN COLLEGE

COMPARATIVE WOMEN'S STUDIES

Established in 1981 with the founding of the Women's Research and Resource Center, the Comparative Women's Studies (CWS) program at Spelman College is the first undergraduate women's studies program at an historically Black college or university (HBCU) offering a major and minor. Both interdisciplinary and international/cross-cultural in scope, the CWS curriculum at Spelman is unique within higher education because of its programmatic emphasis: black feminist theory, women's health, digital media documentation of women's lives, and activism. Students in the CWS program:

- interact with a substantive body of knowledge about the social construction of gender in various cultural contexts, from a variety of disciplinary perspectives;
- acquire analytical tools for understanding the lives and experiences of women in various cultural contexts, especially the African Diaspora (US, Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Europe)
- engage in comparative analysis of the situation of women globally, especially women of African descent.

Through exposure to feminist critiques of traditional scholarship in the disciplines and through attention to masculine biases in the history of knowledge, CWS students learn to interrogate the intersectionality of race, class, sexuality, and gender historically and in contemporary societies, and to critique images of women in literature, the media, and the visual and performing arts.

To fulfill the CWS major or minor, students enroll in a series of foundational courses taught by the Center's core faculty, students are able to choose among several electives emphasizing women and gender, offered either by the CWS program or by other departments and programs, including art, biology, drama and dance, English, foreign languages, history, music, philosophy and religion, political science, psychology, and sociology and anthropology.

The impact of the Comparative Women's Studies program on curriculum transformation across the disciplines has been significant. One exciting outcome, for instance, has been the infusion of a range of race and gender issues into the College's natural sciences curricula, including the addition of an exciting course on "The Biology of Gender." The Center continues to collaborate with other departments, programs, and projects both on and off campus to develop new courses and to rethink existing courses such that Eurocentrism, heteronomativity and gender bias are rigorously challenged.

The Center's core faculty supervise the CWS major and minor. In 2007, the College approved the addition of a new tenure-track faculty line to provide course coverage for the newly designed minor concentration in Global Women's Health. A college-wide interdisciplinary team of faculty—most of whom teach women's studies courses in their respective disciplines and programs—provide additional program guidance as members of the CWS Steering Committee.

WOMEN'S RESEARCH & RESOURCE CENTER
SPELMAN COLLEGE

ARCHIVES AND RESEARCH

The Spelman Archives, which documents the history of the College since its founding in 1881, is an important component of the Women's Center's research mission. The Archives houses the College's administrative records, as well as papers, photographs, and other material associated with alumnae, faculty, staff and affiliates. The Spelman Archives is also becoming a major repository for the personal archives of contemporary Black feminist scholars, activists and writers. These recent acquisitions signal the importance of the Women's Center as a major site for research on contemporary Black women's activism, Black feminist history, and Black women's higher education.

Spelman's rich archival collections constitute a unique resource for scholarship since the College is the only extant institution of higher education that was founded for the purpose of educating African American women and girls. These historic materials are of interest to scholars in U.S. social and cultural history, the history of women, especially women of African descent, and the history of elementary, secondary, and collegiate education for African American women and girls.

The records housed in the Spelman Archives are unavailable anywhere else and are also an indispensable source for the study of the history and development of the Atlanta University Center, a consortium of historically black colleges and institutions of higher education which include Clark Atlanta University, Spelman College, Morehouse College, Morris Brown College, the Interdenominational Theological Center, and the Morehouse School of Medicine.

The diversity of special collections also provides scholars with invaluable sources related to women in the sciences, medicine, religion and the arts; social and political movements; community development; Black feminist thought; and the history of African American women in the US and around the world.

Major recent acquisitions include the personal papers of several leading African American women:

- Toni Cade Bambara, writer, filmmaker, and community organizer.
- Selma Burke, pioneering African American female sculptor, best known for her work of Franklin Delano Roosevelt on the American ten cent piece (dime).
- Johnnetta Betsch Cole, anthropologist, first African American female president of Spelman College, and President Emerita of Bennett College for Women – the only person to have ever led two historically black institutions for women .
- Audrey Forbes Manley, pediatrician, former Acting Surgeon General of the U.S., and first alumna president of Spelman College.
- Audre Lorde, one of the most significant and influential Black lesbian feminist writer/activist/educators of the twentieth century.

In 2002, the Center completed a five-year project under College Archivist Taronda Spencer's leadership. It is a descriptive bibliography of the institutional records and manuscript collections in the archives and libraries of 95 historically Black colleges and universities covering 20 states and the District of Columbia. *The HBCU Archival Study Project*, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, is *the* most comprehensive effort of its kind ever undertaken.

WOMEN'S RESEARCH & RESOURCE CENTER SPELMAN COLLEGE

THE WOMEN'S RESEARCH AND RESOURCE CENTER: AN OVERVIEW

Established in 1981, the Women's Research and Resource Center at Spelman College is a pioneer among historically Black and women's colleges firmly rooted in the liberal arts tradition. We are a distinctive and vital site for scholarship, faculty and curriculum development, student activist leadership development, and advocacy focused on women of African descent in the United States and around the globe.

Our vision of growth is one that upholds Spelman's distinctive legacy of diverse leadership committed to social justice and progressive change. Our programs include:

- **Comparative Women's Studies,** which offers a range of core courses and complementary programs that analyze women's experiences from a multi-disciplinary and cross-cultural perspective;
- **Research & Archives,** focusing specifically on scholarship by and about Black women and a unique special collections of archival holdings on Black women in the contemporary feminist movement and higher education;
- **Advocacy & Outreach,** assisting other universities and organizations as they mainstream issues of race and gender in course offerings and programs;
- **Student Activist Leadership Development** that helps students make the critical link between ideas and action;
- **Digital Media,** utilizing emerging technologies to document and disseminate the untold stories of Black women; and
- **Global Women's Health,** a unique campus-wide program that elevates, supports curriculum development, and undertakes timely research about the health status of Black and other women of color

Our programming is guided by a commitment to create a global community of progressive women and men who envision a world free from injustice, exploitation, violence, poverty, waste, greed, illness and misogyny. Through curricular innovation, scholarship, activism, and collaborations, the Center is educating future generations of free-thinking, unapologetic Black women who will join with others to transform our communities and rescue the planet..

Fundamental to this vision are several core beliefs.

. . .to serve as a national model of progressive higher education, working with other colleges and universities to engage in curriculum transformation that challenges Eurocentrism, heteronormativity and gender bias, while simultaneously creating campus climates of inclusion that embrace difference.

. . .to produce scholarship and new media that disrupts erroneous representations and interpretations of our historical experiences and contemporary realities as Black women.

. . .to serve as a catalyst for student involvement in advocacy and activist projects – across the globe – that promote equity, equality and positive social change for those who have been marginalized, disenfranchised, silenced and oppressed.

. . .to become *the* premiere repository for undervalued materials – in print and digital media – by and about Black women and higher education, and contemporary feminist movements.

. . .to embrace and live out the vision of a "beloved community" that struggles to treat all humankind with dignity, while working to eliminate all forms of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, age, and ability.

WOMEN'S RESEARCH & RESOURCE CENTER
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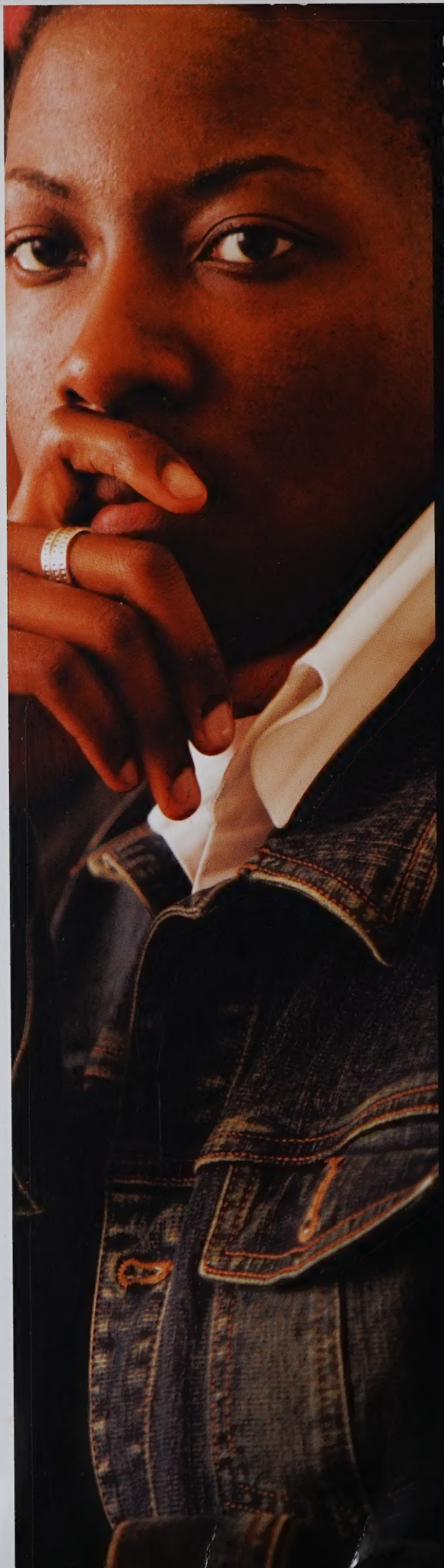
Spelman College

A Choice to Change the World



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WOMEN'S RESEARCH & RESOURCE CENTER
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For information on how you can invest in future generations of dynamic Black women and the forward-thinking programs of the Women's Center, please contact:

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